Published and Copyright (c) 1999 - 2003
All Rights Reserved

Atari Online News, Etc.
A-ONE Online Magazine
Dana P. Jacobson, Publisher/Managing Editor
Joseph Mirando, Managing Editor
Rob Mahlert, Associate Editor

Atari Online News, Etc. Staff

Dana P. Jacobson -- Editor
Joe Mirando -- "People Are Talking"
Michael Burkley -- "Unabashed Atariophile"
Albert Dayes -- "CC: Classic Chips"
Rob Mahlert -- Web site
Thomas J. Andrews -- "Keeper of the Flame"

With Contributions by:

Kevin Savetz

To subscribe to A-ONE, change e-mail addresses, or unsubscribe, log on to our website at: www.atarinews.org and click on "Subscriptions".
OR subscribe to A-ONE by sending a message to: dpj@atarinews.org and your address will be added to the distribution list.
To unsubscribe from A-ONE, send the following: Unsubscribe A-ONE
Please make sure that you include the same address that you used to subscribe from.

To download A-ONE, set your browser bookmarks to one of the following sites:

http://people.delphiforums.com/dpj/a-one.htm
http://www.icwhen.com/aone/
http://a1mag.atari.org
Now available:
http://www.atarinews.org

Visit the Atari Advantage Forum on Delphi!
http://forums.delphiforums.com/atari/

=~=~=~=

~ Fighting Spam Advice! ~ People Are Talking! ~ Erased Hard Drive?

~ Copyright Case Truce! ~ Sobig Worm Gets Bigger ~ NoSTalgia Updated!
~ HP #1 PC Makers Again! ~ Kazaa Suit Approved! ~ HP Hindered Probe?
~ Internet Tax Ban Fight ~ Morpheus Gets Upgrade! ~ Dog Daze Site Is Up!

-* AOL Falling Behind the Times *-
-* Microsoft Settles California Suits! *-
-* Microsoft, Sun At Odds Over Java Orders! *-

=~=~=~=

->From the Editor's Keyboard "Saying it like it is!"
"""""""""""""""""""""""""""

Okay, I'm ready to head to warmer climates! Boy has it been cold this past week! With the wind chill, it's been in the teens all week during the day and in the single digits (if lucky!) at night! I surrender! It's time for that typical January thaw! Yeah right - no warmth in sight.

Speaking of warmth, I wonder if politicians across the country are buying their flame-retardant longjohns! They're certainly feeling the heat over this on-again, off-again battle over levying sales taxes for internet sales. It's amazing that politicians will learn about and discover ways to gain new revenue streams, but can't find a way to make sure kids get a proper education, or have enough food to eat, or take care of the homeless. Funny how when the economy was "good", no one wanted to go after internet sales taxes because they were concerned about hurting this "new" industry. Maybe if they worried more about controlling excessive spending and balancing their budgets, things would improve. Then again, who do I think I'm kidding? I better not get started or I'll give myself a stroke! Then again, once my blood pressure starts to rise, I'll feel more warm.

Hey, how about the ongoing saga at AOL? I'm really surprised that it's taken this long for things to start to sour there. Don't get me wrong, I'm an AOL subscriber (mostly so my father can have access), but it seems like they've been coasting for awhile. Just because AOL has been the number one internet service for some time now, eventually things start to spiral downward. Whether or not the merger with Time-Warner had a role in this, I don't know. Obviously things have been souring; I was surprised when I heard Steve Case resigned. The proverbial writing on the wall?

Well, I've reached my saturation point for serious discussion for this week. There's a lot of things going on in the computing arena today that can try one's patience. Tons of spam, threats of viruses, pop-up ads, etc. It's almost not fun any more! I guess we'll prevail, eventually.

Until next time...

=~=~=~=

NoSTalgia 1.2 Released

NoSTalgia 1.2 is out.

- Mac OS X only.
- New Speed control.
- New ’Auto frame’ code.
- Fixed some bugs in the MMU code.
- New I/O, HDD code.
- New ST mouse driver.
- Use less CPU.
- Hard disk images compatibles with DiskCopy.
- Lots of internal changes.
- Disks detection is now working (fixes Aladin and NAES).
- Information messages are in the console.log

http://users.skynet.be/sky39147/

Dog Daze Web Site

Gary Chang, author of the 8-bit games Claim Jumper and the APX programs Dog Daze, Dog Daze Deluxe, and Bumpomov’s Dogs, has set up a Web site about those games. Descriptions, short histories, and reviews of the games are included. All four games are available for download.

http://www.concentric.net/~Ktchang/

=~=~=~=

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

compiled by Joe Mirando
joe@atarinews.org

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. I don’t expect any sympathy from any of you, but it’s been cold as all get-out here this past week. I’m sure that it’s colder in many other parts of the world right now, but this little cold snap is a bit unusual for us.

I don’t pretend that this is the most important problem in the world. Heck, I’m one of those people who actually likes the cold. I’m lucky enough to have a nice warm apartment and a car that will start in the morning, so I figure that I’m "good to go". But to listen to the local news programs, you’d think that this was the beginning of a new ice age.

I guess they’ve got to find some way to fill their allotted time, but I’d probably make other choices. That’s easy for me to say since I don’t actually have to make the choices or find alternatives. The difference between me and many others is...

I realize that.

I’m not talking about just this cold-snap, I’m talking about life in general. Every day I see people (both personally and publicly) ’mouthing off’ about things that don’t directly affect them or that they don’t understand well enough to have an informed opinion about. I must be getting old, because I find it more and more annoying that people can’t understand that their little problems aren’t the worst thing in the world.

I’m going to warn you now that this is going to be a short column. I’ve got a migraine at the moment, and it makes it hard to concentrate. If you’ve never had a migraine, all I can say is, you don’t want one! While there are a fairly wide range of possible symptoms, the one constant is pain. The first time I had a migraine, both my doctor and I thought I was having a stroke. But the migraine will go away eventually and I’ll again be able to see color and function without even a little bit of light or sound causing me pain. All in all, it’s not the biggest problem in the world... at least not to anyone but me.

I’ve just spent about an hour staring at my usual utilities for putting this column together, and I just can’t concentrate enough to get it done. I’m sorry folks, but there just won’t be any NewsGroup stuff here this week.

I thought I could get it done. I really did. But, as is happening all around the world right now, what I WANT to happen and what is GOING to happen are two different things.

Since I’ll be able to claim ’special circumstances’ once the migraine has passed, I’m going to take this opportunity to ask people to think more and try to put themselves in other people’s places before they render a judgment. Start with the small things and work your way up. I’m not saying that everyone has to be (or should be) a bleeding heart, tree-hugging liberal, but understanding is becoming more and more important. It used to be that people who were heard had already proven themselves in the public arena (just think of the Douglas/Lincoln debate or the orations of Socrates and Plato or any of a number of other ’great’ occurrences throughout history). But these days, all you need is a computer (and ANY idiot can get one of those... I’m proof of that) or something outlandish enough to attract the attention of the local media, and you’ve got a springboard for getting your message out. While there’s tremendous potential for both good and bad, there’s also a much more subtle effect going on that I don’t think we’ve even started to come to terms with. We don’t need to prove ourselves anymore. Intellectual accomplishments are now less important than the glamour factor. And we, as a whole, have less time available to think about what’s going on around us because there is so much more going on all at once. Sometimes I think that the best thing that could happen to us is that something force us to slow down.

So sit down for a few minutes and read through the magazine. Relax a little bit for a little while and actually think. No, I’m not calling you stupid. All I’m implying is that we need to start looking past the front page again and thinking about what happens, how it happens, and why it happens.

Well, That’s it for this week. Next week we’ll be back to the usual news and stuff from the UseNet. Thanks for indulging me a little. It’s knowing that there are still a few people out there who appreciate our labors (even if they don’t find it particularly useful to themselves) that makes A-ONE worthwhile for us.

’Till next time, keep your ears open so that you’ll hear what they’re

saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

=~=~=~=

->In This Week's Gaming Section - Playstation 2 Hits 50 Million!
""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""

=~=~=~=

->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!
""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""

PlayStation 2 Hits Another Milestone

Production of Sony Computer Entertainment's PlayStation 2 games console has passed the 50 million unit mark, the company said Thursday.

Total worldwide production of the console, which was first launched in March 2000 in the Japan market, stood at 50.03 million units as of Wednesday, SCEI said in a statement. Of that, 43 percent of all consoles produced were models for the North American market, 32 percent for the European market, and the remaining 25 percent for the Japanese and South Korean markets.

Production of the PlayStation 2 reached the 50 million unit mark after 2 years and 10 months from its initial debut, which is 1 year and 2 months faster than it took the original PlayStation console to get to the same point, said SCEI.

It also comes just 4 months after PlayStation 2 production passed the 40 million unit mark and the quick jump was helped by record sales of the console over the holiday period.

SCEI said it sold a total of 8.5 million PlayStation 2 consoles during November and December, a jump of 24 percent on the previous year. Of those sales, 4 million were in the North American market, 3.4 million were in the European market, and 940,000 units were in the Japanese market. End of year domestic sales were down 27 percent, however those in North America and Europe were up 42 percent and 27 percent respectively.

Along with the console there are also more than 1,500 software titles available, production of which has passed 300 million units, said SCEI.

The company also recently started selling network adapters for an online gaming service. Sales of the PlayStation 2 network adapter in North

America had reached 400,000 units by the end of December 2002 while production of adapters for SCEI's service in Japan stood at 190,000 units at the same time, the company said.

=~=~=~=

A-ONE's Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Once-Mighty AOL Slipping Behind the Times

Long before the departure of Steve Case, signs were abundant that America Online had fallen behind the times.

As rivals move from dial-up to high-speed access, offering online games and dating services with video, AOL remains king of a stagnant and increasingly low-tech empire of phone users.

"We have to ask, 'Can they go forward?'" said Jakob Nielsen, principal of Nielsen Norman Group, an Internet think tank. "They have to come up with something new."

Case, who co-founded AOL in 1985, announced Sunday that he would resign.

The Hawaii native rode AOL's skyrocketing fortunes to a mega-merger with Time Warner's media empire in 2001. But with Case piloting the ship, AOL Time Warner succumbed to a dogged post-merger hangover that laid low its share price and toppled Case's stewardship.

AOL's parent got another jolt Monday as CNN chief Walter Isaacson, a former Time magazine executive, quit after losing a ratings battle with Fox News Channel. AOL Time Warner shares fell 15 cents to close at $15.03 each on the New York Stock Exchange.

Analysts say AOL's kingdom of 35 million global subscribers will soon shrink without a big infusion of ingenuity - and a painful push that takes them away from very profitable but increasingly outmoded dial-up subscriptions.

According to Jupiter Research, by 2004 revenues from broadband Internet subscriptions will surpass those of dial-up. AOL currently owns about a third of U.S. dial-up accounts, but just one in 30 broadband subscriptions, said Jupiter's Dylan Brooks.

"This is a classic case of someone being on top of the hill and not seeing the horizon," Forrester Research's Chris Charron said. "AOL developed a killer app for dial-up. They never developed a killer interface for the broadband environment."

As AOL fumbles with merger foibles, competitors forge ahead with new technology.

Yahoo! Inc. announced Sunday that it will let users of its online dating service submit video clips. Amazon.com is increasingly morphing into an online store for consumer electronics goodies.

And last week, There Inc. introduced an online universe in which participants will assume cartoon-like characters that many believe trumps the chat rooms and message boards at AOL.

Worse, perhaps, is the fact that AOL loses its last booster in the corporate office when Case waves aloha in May.

The division’s fate then rests solely in the hands of old-line media executives from Time Warner. Some of those executives are thought to be stewing over a company that, from their perspective, was laid low by the merger with AOL.

"That doesn’t bode well for AOL," Nielsen said.

Since Time Warner’s Pathfinder Internet venture went south years ago, the New York media empire hasn’t been credited with much online prowess.

With AOL expected to be tied for third place in 2003 revenues among Time Warner’s six divisions, the corporation’s moguls might not be in the mood to lavish it with funds and attention.

"From the corporate Time Warner perspective, that could become their decision - sit back and cash in your monthly subscriptions and not do much innovation for (AOL subscribers)," Nielsen said.

Were that to happen, AOL might become "an irrelevant corner of the Internet" like CompuServe, the once-strong service it overtook and later bought, Nielsen said.

Though the parent company has so far failed to find the formula for effectively distributing Time Warner content on AOL, there are less pessimistic scenarios.

They may yet succeed - with the right mix of cajoling and cooperation, said David Joyce, a financial analyst with Miami investment bank Guzman & Co.

A captive audience of 35 million is nothing to sniff at, Joyce said. "It’s still a valuable asset, and it can help unite the other parts of the Time Warner empire."

HP Takes No. 1 PC Maker Spot Back from Dell

Hewlett-Packard Co. took the No. 1 worldwide personal computer maker spot back from Dell Computer Corp. during the fourth quarter in what has become a tight race, research group IDC said on Thursday.

In what has become a quarter-by-quarter struggle for dominance, Hewlett-Packard ended up with 16.1 percent of the market, while Dell held 15.7 percent, IDC said.

HP’s market share increased because more of its business comes from consumers, who bought PCs during the holiday season. Dell’s customer base

has a larger percentage of corporations in it and they held back on buying new computers because of concerns about profitability.

HP bought Compaq Computer in May of last year, catapulting it over Dell into the No. 1 personal computer spot. Then in the third quarter, Dell regained the spot.

"They've traded the crown a couple of times," said IDC analyst Roger Kay. "HP's overall mix is more consumer oriented than Dell's is, so HP benefited from the consumer quarter."

Next quarter will be more focused on corporate sales, Kay said. "Maybe Dell will take it back again."

Total worldwide PC shipments grew by 4 percent to 38.4 million units in the fourth quarter of 2002.

Microsoft Settles California Suits for $1 Billion

Microsoft Corp. said on Friday that it would pay up to $1.1 billion to settle class action lawsuits brought by California residents who claimed the company had abused its market position and overcharged for software.

The settlement will be paid out to up to 13 million eligible California businesses and consumers in the form of vouchers to buy computers and software, including products made by Microsoft rivals, a lawyer for the plaintiffs said.

The California lawsuits were the largest of their kind pending against Microsoft, although the world's No. 1 software company, which admitted no wrongdoing under the settlement, still faces claims it overcharged consumers in other states.

The settlement came on the same day that a federal judge in Baltimore refused to dismiss antitrust charges brought against the company by competitor Sun Microsystems Inc. and two small software companies.

"We believe that this agreement makes a significant step forward to resolve our antitrust legal issues," Microsoft General Counsel Brad Smith told a conference call.

Final approval of the California settlement is still pending and subject to approval by a San Francisco court later this month.

California consumers and businesses who purchased Microsoft's Windows operating systems, or Excel or Word programs between Feb. 18, 1995, and Dec. 15, 2001 will be eligible to receive the vouchers under the settlement.

The amount of the rebate will be set per software license. Businesses, which often buy Microsoft software licenses for many employees, could get a substantial voucher payment, said Daniel Furniss, a partner at San Francisco-based Townsend Townsend and Crew and co-lead counsel in the case.

"Businesses are going to have big claims," Furniss said.

For example, computer users will receive a voucher for $26 for each copy

of Excel purchased during the period in question. The voucher will be set at $16 per copy of Microsoft's flagship operating system software and at $5 per copy of its word-processing program Word or the now-discontinued program Works, Furniss said.

Microsoft will also pay for plaintiff's legal fees, to be determined by the court, and for administration of the voucher program.

The Redmond, Washington-based company has agreed to mail and e-mail notifications to all of the California computers users in its database, publish newspaper ads to publicize the voucher program and set up a Web site to allow users to get claim forms, Furniss said.

Two-thirds of any unclaimed settlement proceeds up to $1.1 billion will be donated to California's neediest public schools to be used for computer equipment and related services in a program to be administered by the state.

Microsoft would keep the remaining one third of any unclaimed portion.

A federal judge had scuttled Microsoft's previously negotiated settlement in class action lawsuits pending against Microsoft in 35 states.

Lawyers for the California plaintiffs had also opposed the terms of that settlement because it had not provided as much latitude for claimants to use their vouchers for competing computer-related goods.

Microsoft said that it is working to resolve lawsuits remaining in Arizona, Kansas, South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Tennessee, Mississippi, Florida, West Virginia, Montana, North Carolina, Massachusetts, Vermont, and the District of Columbia.

"We are very focused on reaching terms whenever possible," Microsoft General Counsel Brad Smith told a conference call.

The unclaimed money in the California settlement would go toward cash-strapped California schools just as the state looks to cut back sharply on its own spending and increase taxes to make up for deep budget shortfalls.

"Coming at a time when California is in the middle of a significant budget crisis, these funds and software will help to ensure that California's school children get technology they can use," Jack O'Connell, California's State Superintendent of Public Instruction said in a statement.

The vouchers can be transferred to another person up to a value of $650 under the settlement and a single person can acquire up to a total of $10,000 in the vouchers. Claimants will have four months to claim the vouchers after final settlement is approved by the court.

The first California lawsuit that became the basis of the class-action claim was filed in February 1999.

State Says HP Frustrated Probes

California's attorney general has accused Hewlett-Packard Co. and its lawyers of misleading investigators and frustrating state and federal

probes into potential defects in millions of computers, the Wall Street Journal reported on Monday.

The newspaper said the state disclosed the "improper tactics" in court documents unsealed within the last two weeks in the Superior Court of California in San Francisco.

The Journal said the allegation surrounds $27.5 million in consulting fees Hewlett-Packard paid to Phillip Adams, a computer expert who had alerted law-enforcement officials about suspected flaws in floppy-disk drives in Hewlett-Packard and other companies' PCs that can randomly delete or alter data without users' knowledge.

As state and federal officials investigated his claims, the Journal said, Adams abruptly switched sides and signed a lucrative consulting agreement to help defend Hewlett-Packard in certain future litigation.

He also handed over his patented software "fix" to the company and pledged that he wouldn't assist private plaintiffs' lawyers seeking damages from Hewlett-Packard, the Journal said, citing the court documents.

According to the Journal, a spokesman for California Attorney General Bill Lockyer said over the weekend that the state went after the "truly extraordinary conduct" of Hewlett-Packard and Adams "to prevent whistle-blowers from switching sides in (a case) midstream, colluding with the defendants" for financial gain "and then undermining" state cases.

Microsoft, Sun at Odds Over Java Antitrust Order

A federal judge stepped in on Wednesday to referee a simmering dispute between Microsoft Corp.and Sun Microsystems Inc.over a court order that Microsoft start distributing Sun's Java programming language in its Windows operating system.

U.S. District Judge J. Frederick Motz summoned the two rival software makers to a meeting in federal court in Baltimore the day after Sun accused Microsoft of undermining Motz's order to include Java in Windows.

Motz ruled on Dec. 23 that Sun had a good chance of winning its antitrust case against Microsoft, and said he would grant a preliminary injunction forcing Microsoft to include Java in Windows. He ordered each side to draft a proposal detailing how to carry out the Java "must-carry" directive and then negotiate a compromise with each other.

But the two sides have been unable to agree.

Sun filed documents with the court on Wednesday saying Microsoft was trying "to narrow and postpone its obligations to distribute the Java platform." Microsoft's plan would allow it to take up to a year before actually including Java in versions of Windows it sells, Sun complained in its filing.

Microsoft, on the other hand, has cautioned that it believes Sun's plan would rush the incorporation of Java into Windows, disrupting the industry and hurting consumers.

Sun's lawsuit charges Microsoft has tried to sabotage Java and plans to

dominate the market with its rival .NET Web services software.

Sun, based in Santa Clara, California, claims Microsoft views Sun's Java software as a threat because it can run on a variety of operating systems, not just on Microsoft's Windows.

Among tactics cited in the lawsuit, Sun alleges Microsoft promoted an incompatible form of Java that worked best on Windows and, most recently, dropped it from Windows XP, which was introduced last year.

Microsoft spokesman Jim Desler said Sun's proposal was "ambiguous, overly broad and would mandate an unreasonable timetable" for getting Java into Windows.

"Implemetation could result in great disruption to the industry as well as undue harm to consumers," Desler said.

Microsoft responded with a lengthy counter-proposal.

"We have formulated a clear approach that will quickly achieve the court's objectives without many of the adverse consequences that would flow from Sun's proposed order," Desler said.

In its filing on Wednesday, Sun said Microsoft had added burdensome provisions to the injunction that "would not be commercially reasonable."

"Not only would such provisions subject Sun to greater costs and liabilities than necessary, some of Microsoft's proposed terms could serve as loopholes undermining the relief that Sun has been granted."

Specifically, Sun complained that Microsoft's proposal would initially require the company only to offer the Java software as a "recommended update" on its Web site and in CD-ROMs distributed to computer makers.

Sun asked the judge to ignore Microsoft's proposal and impose its proposed order.

Motz has been assigned cases arising from the landmark government antitrust suit filed in 1998, including a private suit by AOL Time Warner and class actions suits on behalf of consumers.

Two states, Massachusetts and West Virginia, have appealed as too weak a settlement of the government case endorsed by U.S. District Judge Colleen Kollar Kotelly in November.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, in 2001, agreed that Microsoft had illegally maintained its monopoly in the Windows computer operating system but rejected breaking the company in two to prevent future violations.

Judge Orders Microsoft to Add Java in 120 Days

Microsoft Corp. will have 120 days to release a version of Sun Microsystems' Java programming language for Windows after a federal judge issues his formal order against the software giant.

U.S. District Judge J. Frederick Motz set that schedule Wednesday during a lengthy hearing with lawyers from both companies. Sun had sought a 90-day period, while Microsoft wanted a three-phase approach that would have extended over 180 days.

"I want to provide the incentive to get this done," Motz said. He said Microsoft could request additional time for its Java work later, with a good reason.

Motz also said he would grant a two-week stay after he issues the order, to give the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals a chance to hear Microsoft's expected appeal.

Microsoft will have to release a version of Windows XP Service Pack 2 with Java. That Windows version contains Microsoft's .Net initiative, which was developed as an alternative to Java.

"We're not going to be happy with any order and, of course, that's why we'll be going up to the court of appeals," Microsoft lawyer David Tulchin said.

Motz asked the two sides to continue working toward an agreement and to submit proposals on Monday, the day he said he'd like to issue his order.

Motz also rescinded two orders he made last week to dismiss two of Sun's claims in its lawsuit against Microsoft. The judge said he'd misunderstood what issues those orders concerned.

Earlier Wednesday, Microsoft spokesman Jim Desler said Sun's proposal was "ambiguous, overly broad and would really mandate an unreasonable timetable."

Java is designed to let programmers write software to run on all types of computers, whether they use Windows, Apple's Mac OS or some other operating system. Users may run into Java without knowing it when they visit Web sites that feature games or other applications.

Sun argues in its lawsuit that Microsoft has gained an unfair advantage by shipping Windows - used by more than 90 percent of the world's personal computers - with an outdated version of Java that's inconsistent for its users.

Sun also wants Microsoft to notify customers of the latest Java through all Microsoft update services for Windows and the company's Web browser, Internet Explorer.

Sun claims Microsoft has been exaggerating the effect of Sun's proposed order.

Microsoft has said it plans to appeal Motz's order once it is filed.

Internet Tax Ban Efforts Resume

Online shoppers may get a tax break, as members of Congress move to ban taxes on Internet access, taxes on Internet transactions involving several jurisdictions, and discriminatory taxes that treat Internet purchases differently from other types of commerce.

Two bills introduced in the past week would make permanent a moratorium of taxes on Internet access; the current moratorium is set to expire in November. One bipartisan measure comes from Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Oregon) and Rep. Christopher Cox (R-California); the other is sponsored by Sen. George Allen (R-Virginia).

The two bills differ only on a few technical points, according to Carrie Cantrell, Allen's press secretary.

"I am concerned that if this Congress were to allow discriminatory taxes on Internet access it would allow state governments to exacerbate the economic digital divide," Allen says. "For every dollar added to the cost of Internet access, we can expect to see lost utilization of the Internet by thousands of lower-income families nationwide--and loss of their use of the Internet as a tool for education and opportunity."

Online merchants would suffer as much as the buyers if Internet access taxes were allowed, the Congress members note.

"A decrease in consumption resulting from Internet access taxes could destroy what glimmer of hope remains for many telecommunications and technology manufacturers," Allen says. "We want to help create job opportunities - not burden this important sector of our economy."

Both bills also aim to ban discriminatory taxes - namely sales tax on Internet purchases from companies that have no physical presence in the state where the buyer resides. The bills are separate from the Streamlined Sales Tax Project legislation passed in November, which lets companies impose sales taxes on purchases made online if their home states simplify their fragmented sales tax programs.

Adam D. Thierer of the Cato Institute, a libertarian think tank, says many states want to cash in on Internet commerce involving companies that have no operations within their borders.

"The Internet is the purest form of interstate commerce you'll ever find; by its very nature it defies boundaries, and yet states are salivating at how to impose taxes," Thierer says. "This all amounts to a hill of beans that is absolutely meaningless to helping states with their fiscal situations."

Regardless of the effect on state coffers, Thierer believes sales taxes on Internet commerce will eventually become commonplace. However, he expects Congress will stand firm on banning Internet access taxes.

"It just becomes another tax on talking and communicating, which is something people will find very offensive," Thierer says.

Seven states currently have the right to tax Internet access because those states levied taxes on Internet access before Congress passed the first moratorium in 1998. However, the states - New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, and Wisconsin - have largely respected the moratorium and refrained from imposing the access taxes.

File-Swapping Lawsuit Gets OK

A federal judge has given record companies and movie studios the go-ahead to sue the parent company of Kazaa, a popular online file-swapping service.

U.S. District Judge Stephen V. Wilson refused to dismiss a copyright infringement lawsuit against Sharman Networks Ltd., which had argued that it could not be sued in the United States because it is based in Australia and incorporated in the South Pacific nation of Vanuatu.

In a 46-page ruling issued Friday, the judge said Sharman is subject to U.S. copyright laws because it has substantial business dealings in California and its actions are alleged to contribute to commercial piracy within the United States.

Kelly Larabee, a Sharman spokeswoman, said that while the company was "disappointed" with the ruling on the case, "we fully expect to prevail on the merits."

Larabee said Sharman would be filing a counterclaim that will "set forth the full story for the first time."

The Sharman case is one of the largest in the recent online copyright wars testing the international reach of U.S. courts. The plaintiffs maintain that Kazaa provides free access to copyrighted music and films to about 21 million U.S. users.

Morpheus Update to Offer Easier File Swapping

StreamCast Networks is preparing an upgrade to its Morpheus file-sharing software that will allow users to search further across the peer-to-peer network for songs and other files, making it easier to locate obscure or rare recordings, the company’s chairman and chief executive officer said Saturday.

The company also is preparing a Web-based, "remote control" version of its software for PDAs and mobile phones. While away from home, users will be able to instruct the Morpheus client on their PC to locate and retrieve files for playback when they return, said Steve Griffin, StreamCast’s chairman and chief executive officer. Both enhancements are due by mid-year, he said.

Like some other file sharing services, when Morpheus scours the Internet for a file it looks at a "cluster" of only about 15,000 PCs, even though as many as a million Morpheus users may be online at any given time. Griffin said. While that’s often enough machines to find a popular song, for example, more obscure files sometimes don’t show up.

By mid-year the company will introduce an upgrade to its client that allows "cluster-hopping." If the Morpheus client doesn’t find what it’s looking for in the user’s local cluster it will hop further afield to other clusters of PCs until it finds the file, Griffin said in an interview at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.

The update will likely include other tweaks intended to boost the performance of the software and make it easier to use, he said. It will also be made smaller and therefore easier to download, Griffin said.

The new features may be welcomed by users but the recording and motion

picture industries will probably be less than enthusiastic. They are suing StreamCast, along with other popular file-sharing services, in a U.S. district court for allegedly contributing to mass copyright infringement.

On Friday, the judge overseeing that case ordered that Sharman Networks, which offers the Kazaa P-to-P software, can be included in those proceedings. Kazaa had argued that it lies outside of the court's jurisdiction because the company is incorporated in the South Pacific island nation of Vanuatu and has no substantial ties in the U.S. Grokster, another popular file-sharing system, is also a target of the lawsuit.

Morpheus had as many as 35 million active users in December, according to Griffin. He said that's about the same number it had amassed just prior to February of last year, when it had to rebuild its user base from scratch after losing its customers when it switched to a new P-to-P technology.

StreamCast so far has incurred some $3 million in legal costs to battle the case, Griffin said, and for a time last year its future looked "suspect" because of the burden imposed by the fees, he said. It makes money selling advertising and would be profitable were it not for the legal costs, he said.

With motions seeking to conclude the case now filed by both sides, much of the legal "heavy lifting" work has been completed and StreamCast is on more solid ground financially, he said. If the case goes to trial, however, the legal fees could start climbing once more, he acknowledged.

Friday's order about Kazaa may clear the way for the judge to make his next move in the case, Griffin said. He can approve a motion by StreamCast to dismiss the suit, approve a motion by the entertainment industry to have Morpheus shut down, or send the case to a jury trial. A ruling on that could be made in as little as six weeks' time, Griffin said.

If the judge were to rule that Morpheus should be shut down, StreamCast has no sure way of ending the service, according to Griffin. Unlike the ill-fated Napster service, Morpheus does not rely on a central server for a list of the files in its P-to-P network, making it harder to pull the plug on its users' activities, he said.

One potential option would be to offer a software update to users that "breaks" their Morpheus client, rendering it unusable. But word of such an update would likely be spread quickly among users, meaning few would actually download it, Griffin said, adding that it's not an option he would like to have to resort to.

He stopped short of saying that his company's users are breaking the law by sharing copyright-protected material, but acknowledged that some may be making "bad choices." He argued that those choices are not StreamCast's responsibility.

"Once the software is downloaded, that is the last involvement they have with me," he said. "We don't have anything to do with what they trade."

Unfortunately for him, the entertainment industry doesn't see things the same way.

RIAA Says Worm Advisory Was A Hoax

An advisory sent Monday to security mailing lists claiming the Recording Industry Association of America had contracted a group of hackers to create a worm to infect peer-to-peer file-swapping networks is a hoax, the organization that represents music publishers said Wednesday.

"These claims are absolutely false," says a spokesman for the RIAA.

The security group, which calls itself Gobbles Security, sent the hoax to Symantec's BuqTraq mailing list and the vulnerability-tracking site VulnWatch. In the advisory, Gobbles claimed it was "recruited by the RIAA (riaa.org) to invent, create, and finally deploy the future of antipiracy tools. We focused on creating virii/worm hybrids to infect and spread over p2p nets." The group also claimed it had developed a hydra worm capable of infecting many common media players, including Microsoft Media Player and WinAMP.

"It took us about a month to develop the complex hydra, and another month to bring it up to the standards of excellence that the RIAA demanded of us," Gobbles wrote.

Users of these media players need not worry about the worm, as the claim of its development is apparently false. However, Gobbles does say that it found a vulnerability in an open-source media player known as MPG123.

Since last summer, the RIAA.org Web site has been hit with a number of attacks, including a denial-of-service attack that made the site largely unavailable for a few days. The site also has been defaced.

While users of the popular media players may not need to worry about getting infected from the worm Gobbles claims to have developed, a bill which would legalize system attacks by copyright owners is under consideration. If a bill sponsored by Reps. Howard Coble, R-N.C., and Howard Berman, D-Calif., makes its way into law, copyright owners would have great leeway to do things that would currently send hackers to prison. The bill would let groups such as the RIAA disable, block, or impair publicly accessible file-swapping networks if copyrighted material was being illegally traded on those nets.

Attacks against the RIAA Web site proliferated shortly after the introduction of the bill in July.

Record Labels, Techs Call Truce in Copyright Fight

The recording industry and several high-tech groups battling over copyright laws declared a tentative truce on Tuesday and said they would try to hash out rules to govern how to protect digital movies and music from widespread bootlegging.

The two sides hope to avoid a big lobbying battle this year in Congress over whether to enhance digital copyright protection or preserve the rights of users to make copies. They said they will try to settle their differences and devise rules to govern how movies and music may be used, instead of looking to Congress or the Federal Communications Commission.

But observers say a legislative fight is likely as movie studios and consumer-electronics makers, two big players who have staked out opposing

positions, have not signed the deal.

The Recording Industry Association of America, which represents the five big record labels, said it would work cooperatively with the Business Software Alliance and the Computer Systems Policy Project, two trade groups whose members include IBM, Dell Computer Corp., and Intel Corp.

"It represents a sea change in the debate over digital content issues," said Ken Kay, executive director of the Computer Systems Policy Project. "Private-sector developments, not heavy-handed government intrusion, are the best way to protect content consumer choice and innovation."

But several key players in the debate are absent from the agreement, including the Motion Picture Association of America, consumer electronics makers and major consumer groups.

At issue are simmering disputes pitting content providers like record companies and movie studios against the technology industry.

The record companies and Hollywood have lobbied Congress for new ways to stop illegal piracy of their material. One bill introduced by Sen. Ernest Hollings, a South Carolina Democrat, would require Hollywood and Silicon Valley to devise technology that would prevent computers and other digital-media devices from playing back files that did not contain an industry stamp of approval.

Computer industry groups, meanwhile, have been pushing for Congress to bolster "fair use" rights, ensuring consumers retain rights to make limited copies of books, movies and music for personal or academic use.

The three trade groups said they would promote more consumer education about digital copying and more private and government enforcement against copyright infringers.

They also agreed that technical measures dictated by the government "are not practical."

But not everyone agrees.

Disney Corp.,, for example, called in a statement on Tuesday for the government to help set content-protection standards that will be observed by everybody.

"The private sector cannot solve this problem by itself," said Preston Padden, a Disney lobbyist.

The new alliance drew praise from two Democratic lawmakers who have played a large role in digital copyright issues, Vermont Sen. Patrick Leahy and Michigan Rep. John Conyers.

But Virginia Democrat Rick Boucher, who has introduced a "fair use" bill opposed by many media companies, pointed out that the Consumer Electronics Association and other technology companies such as Sun Microsystems Inc.,, Gateway Inc. and Verizon Communications, are not part of the agreement.

"These entities consistently have been in the forefront of promoting fair use rights for digital consumers," Boucher said in a statement.

MPAA Spurns Digital Copyright Plans

Hollywood spurned a high-stakes agreement disclosed Tuesday between leading music and technology companies aiming to protect copyrights on digital movies and music without new government involvement.

The unusual compromise, brokered among the music industry and some of the largest computer companies, lists seven "guiding principles" that the companies hope lawmakers will take into account as Congress develops future technology policies.

The agreement attempts to head off government intervention in the rising debate between Hollywood and Silicon Valley over what consumers can do with commercial music or movies they purchase.

Under the agreement, technology lobbyists will argue that record companies should be permitted to use hacker-style tactics to disrupt Internet downloads of pirated music and movies. They will caution that such tactics must not be destructive to networks or to a user’s computer data, and must not violate a person’s privacy.

They also will argue against efforts in Congress to amend U.S. laws to broaden the rights of consumers, such as explicitly permitting viewers to make backup copies of DVDs for personal use or copy downloaded songs onto handheld listening devices.

In exchange, the Recording Industry Association of America agreed to argue against government requirements to build locking controls into future generations of entertainment devices to make it more difficult for consumers to share music and movies. Technology companies have complained that such controls are too expensive and complex.

"What we’re saying is, we don’t need our heads banged together," said Hilary Rosen, chief executive for the music group. She said the agreement will help stem "needless legislative battles, silly rhetoric about what divides us and continuing disharmony in the public policy arena."

The powerful movie, television and home video industry, represented by the Motion Picture Association of America, spurned the agreement. The MPAA has aggressively supported new government requirements for built-in locking controls on new devices, such as DVD recorders.

It is the primary supporter of a bill by Sen. Ernest Hollings, D-S.C., that would prohibit the manufacture or distribution of "digital media devices" - such as handheld music players - unless they include government-approved copy restriction technology. The passage of Hollings’ bill has been in doubt since the 2002 election, because Republican John McCain of Arizona replaced him as chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee when the GOP won the majority in the Senate.

The MPAA said that despite Tuesday’s agreement, it was "not prepared to abandon the option of seeking technical protection measures via the Congress or appropriate regulatory agency, when necessary." It criticized the music industry for opposing such controls, saying that "no reasonable alternative course of action should be eliminated from consideration."

The MPAA also complained Tuesday about promises by the music and technology companies to participate in "constructive dialogue." It cited plans by the technology industry to spend $1 million over the next six

months on a new organization, the Alliance for Digital Progress. A bid proposal for public-relations companies said the group’s ambition was to "counter Hollywood" on the debate over copyrights.

Technology executives responded that they had sought a six-month "cease-fire" on any lobbying activity during a meeting with Hollywood executives in Chicago in September.

"We thought it would be more productive without the motion-picture industry holding a legislative gun to our head," said Ken Kay of the Computer Systems Policy Project, which represents chief executives at IBM, Dell Computer Corp. and Hewlett-Packard Co., among others.

Both sides said Tuesday they were willing to continue negotiations.

How to Put Spam Out of Your Misery

E-mail users are getting smarter about fighting spam. Some tips to keep your inbox from getting flooded by junk mail:

* Try to keep your e-mail address private. Junk e-mailers, like postal junk mailers, collect addresses that they then package and sell. One way to collect them is to ’’harvest’’ them from the Web, using software that recognizes e-mail addresses and copies them to a list.

Spammers also can get to your e-mail address when you give it out either on purpose or by accident. Before giving out your e-mail address to a company, either online or off, make sure the company is legitimate and will not sell or share your e-mail address. Many company Web sites include this information in a privacy policy posted on the site. Most legitimate companies do not share customers’ e-mail addresses. If you spend time in chat rooms or post messages on online message boards, use an e-mail address that you create specifically for that purpose -- and expect it to be overrun with spam.

* So why are you getting spam if you’ve never put your e-mail out on the Internet? If you use a large Internet service provider, such as America Online, you might be a victim of random addressing. Some programs will simply generate random names, and voila -- you have spam. The best way to avoid that kind of spam is to create an e-mail address that is not composed of real words. Of course, that also makes it harder to remember.

* Don’t reply to spam. If it is truly spam and from a shady operator, responding signals that it’s an active e-mail address. If the company sending it is legitimate, you can ask to be removed from its mailing list. (Chances are that at some point you said it was OK to e-mail you, even if you don’t remember.)

* Report spam to your provider. Virtually every Internet service provider has that option. And the larger the provider, the easier it is.

* You can set up your e-mail so your mailbox rejects mail from correspondents you don’t know.

* Use the delete key liberally.

* If you already are getting a ton of spam, you might consider changing

your e-mail address.

For more tips on how to avoid spam see the FTC’s site, www.ftc.gov/spam.

MIT Conference Takes Aim at Spam

It’s going to take the best and the brightest to slam the spammers.

Hundreds of programmers gathered Friday at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (news - web sites) to apply their collective brainpower to a problem that has evolved from annoyance to menace: the rising flood of unsolicited e-mail.

Companies and Internet service providers put up a fight with the latest filtering programs, but spammers quickly bypass their defenses.

"This is the most dastardly thing I’ve ever seen," said attendee John Graham, expressing grudging admiration for a technique he’s encountered in which spam messages are broken up then reassembled in order to elude filters. "This is ingenious. There are some really clever people making spam difficult to filter."

Organizers had expected a small gathering of 40 to 80 programmers, hackers and Internet activists, but several hundred packed an auditorium to hear the latest in spam countermeasures.

For the more clinical, spam simply poses a difficult technical challenge. Others are downright offended by it.

William S. Yerazunis, an MIT computer scientist, compared spam to petty street crime - cheap to carry out, profitable for the offender and enormously expensive to halt.

"It’s really theft," said Yerazunis, 46, a researcher at MIT’s Mitsubishi Electric Research Laboratories. "And the theft efficiency ratio is about the same as stealing hubcaps and car radios."

The conference wasn’t for the casual computer user.

The speakers threw around hacker-speak like "bit buckets" and "polynomial hashing," occasionally tossing out terms like "spamacus interruptus" and skewering unpopular software, sending chuckles through the audience.

But the tone was serious.

Spam traffic has grown from 8 percent of Internet e-mail in 2001 to as much as 40 percent in 2002, according to Brightmail Inc., which provides filtering products for several major Internet service providers.

Spam is costly for everybody. It costs about $250 to send a million spams, but about $2,800 in lost wages, at the federal minimum wage, for those million spams to be deleted, Yerazunis estimates.

Altogether, spam costs U.S. businesses $8.9 billion and European businesses $2.5 billion annually, according to a study released this month by San Francisco-based Ferris Research. Internet service providers in particular are hounded by customers because they are the conduits for the pesky

messages.

Spam filtering software looks for patterns that suggest an e-mail is spam. But the spammers are constantly evading them, finding new ways to arrange text to make the messages unrecognizable as spam.

Yerazunis' presentation on his CRM114 Discriminator language was a centerpiece of the conference. His filtering technique "hashes" the messages, matching short phrases from the incoming text with phrases that the user previously supplied as example text, catching spam that might not exactly match standard spam text. He claims that the system has higher than 99.9 percent effectiveness; it can be downloaded for free and is compatible with SpamAssassin or other spam-flagging software.

"This thing is even more accurate than humans," he said.

Jason Rennie of MIT's Artificial Intelligence Lab is writing code he says eventually will help filter spam text that is manipulated to be unrecognizable. For example, his program could recognize "mort!!!!gage" used in the place of mortgage, a common spam word.

But filters must be finely tuned depending on intended recipients, Rennie said, because one person's spam is another person's "ham," hacker-speak for desirable e-mail.

"If you work for the company that makes Viagra, you probably don't want to be filtering any e-mail with the word Viagra in it," he said.

Era Eriksson, an activist with the anti-spam Coalition Against Unsolicited Commercial Email, said the only solution is legislation banning or regulating the practice. There are several bills pending in Congress, but none have been passed.

"Every second that I'm online it's costing me money, and to get unsolicited e-mail costs me money. It's criminal," said Eriksson.

Even 'Erased' Hard Drives Hold Info

So, you think you cleaned all your personal files from that old computer you got rid of?

Two MIT graduate students suggest you think again.

Over two years, Simson Garfinkel and Abhi Shelat bought 158 used hard drives at secondhand computer stores and on eBay. Of the 129 drives that functioned, 69 still had recoverable files on them and 49 contained "significant personal information" - medical correspondence, love letters, pornography and 5,000 credit card numbers. One even had a year's worth of transactions with account numbers from a cash machine in Illinois.

About 150,000 hard drives were "retired" last year, according to the research firm Gartner Dataquest. Many end up in the trash, but many also find their way back onto the market.

Over the years, stories have surfaced about personal information turning up on used hard drives, raising concerns about privacy and the danger of identity theft.

Last spring, Pennsylvania sold used computers that contained information about state employees. In 1997, a Nevada woman bought a used computer and discovered it contained prescription records on 2,000 customers of an Arizona pharmacy.

Garfinkel and Shelat, who reported their findings in an article to be published Friday in the journal IEEE Security & Privacy, said they believe they are the first to take a more comprehensive - though not exactly scientific - look at the problem.

On common operating systems such as Microsoft’s Windows, simply deleting a file, or even following that up by emptying the "trash" folder, does not necessarily make the information irretrievable. Those commands generally delete a file’s name from the directory. But the information itself can live on until it is overwritten by new files.

Even reformatting a drive, or preparing the hard drive all over again to store files, may not do it. Fifty-one of the 129 working drives in the MIT study had been reformatted, and 19 of them still contained recoverable data.

The hard-to-erase quality of hard drives is seen as a good thing by some. Many users like believing that, in a pinch, an expert could recover their deleted files. Law enforcement officers can examine a computer and lift incriminating e-mails or porno images from the hard drive.

The only sure way to erase a hard drive is to "squeeze" it: writing over the old information with new data - all zeros, for instance - at least once, but preferably several times. A one-line command will do that for Unix , and for others, inexpensive software from companies such as AccessData works well.

But few people go to the trouble. Many ordinary computer users toss their old drives into the closet, or take a sledgehammer to it.

As it turned out, most of the hard drives acquired by the MIT students came from businesses that apparently had a misplaced confidence in their ability to "sanitize" old drives.

Tom Aleman, who heads the analytic and forensic technology group at the accounting firm Deloitte & Touche, often encounters companies that get burned by failing to fully sanitize, say, the laptop of an employee who leaves the company for a job with a competitor.

"People will think they have deleted the file, they can’t find the file themselves and that the file is gone when, in fact, forensically you may be able to retrieve it," he said.

Garfinkel has learned his lesson. As an undergrad at MIT in the 1980s, he failed to sanitize his own hard drive before returning a computer to his father. His father was able to read his personal journal.

Sobig Worm Getting Even Bigger

A new computer virus, Sobig, is spreading on the Internet, according to alerts posted by a number of antivirus software companies.

Sobig is a worm that uses e-mail and shared network folders to infect machines running Microsoft's Windows operating system, according to information posted on the Web site of Helsinki antivirus company F-Secure.

The worm arrives in e-mail messages from a single sender, big@boss.com, and is stored in attached executable files with names such as Sample.pif, Untitled1.pif, and Movie_0074.mpeg.pif, according to F-Secure.

When opened, the worm places a copy of itself into the Windows folder on the infected machine, creates a process to run the worm program, and modifies the Windows Registry so that the worm program will launch whenever Windows is started.

Once it has infected a machine, the worm searches for e-mail addresses in a variety of text files on the computer's hard drive. It uses those addresses to send out more copies of itself. Sobig also searches for any shared folders on networks that the infected machine may have access to and places a copy of itself in any network folder it can access.

Although the new worm does not appear to steal sensitive information from the computers it infects, antivirus companies warned that the worm does connect to a Web site hosted by Yahoo's GeoCities, from which it tries to download and execute other files, according to F-Secure.

The GeoCities Web page used by Sobig was modified recently to instruct the worm to download a Trojan horse program known as Backdoor.Delf that gives the virus writer and others control of infected machines, according to Mikko Hypp nen, manager of antivirus research at F-Secure.

GeoCities has been notified about the page by F-Secure as well as the CERT Coordination Center, according to Hypp nen. Yahoo was not immediately available to comment on the Sobig worm.

The worm first came to the attention of antivirus companies on Thursday and began spreading slowly, Hypp nen said.

In recent days, however, the virus has spread more rapidly, and the number of machines infected by Sobig has grown.

As of Tuesday, F-Secure gave the worm a Level 2 ranking, indicating that it is "causing large infections" and putting it in a category with well-known predecessors such as the Klez worm.

Other antivirus companies upgraded their threat ratings for Sobig as well. On Monday, Symantec's Security Response upgraded Sobig from a category 2 to a "moderate" category 3 threat.

The success of Sobig since it first appeared surprised Hypp nen, who said that Sobig is a comparatively simple worm that lacks many of the sophisticated features that allow a new generation of viruses to spread.

For example, Sobig always arrives in e-mail messages from the same sender, big@boss.com, unlike recent successful worms such as Bugbear or Lirva, which generated their own sender addresses, swapped in trusted sender addresses from sources such as antivirus vendors, or selected them at random from a long list.

In addition, the Sobig e-mail messages use one of only a small number of subjects--such as "Movie," "Sample," and "Document"--and attachment names.

Recent worms use a far larger list of possible subjects and attachment names or generate their own at random, making it harder for antivirus software to identify such threats, according to Hypp nen.

Finally, Sobig requires e-mail recipients to double-click on the attachment containing the worm. Recent vintage worms like Lirva and Bugbear often take advantage of a Microsoft Internet Explorer and Outlook vulnerability known as the IFrame exploit, which allows e-mail attachments to launch without any user interaction when an e-mail message is opened or simply viewed in an e-mail preview pane.

"I don’t know why it’s spreading. I cannot explain it at all," Hypp nen said.

Most antivirus software vendors updated their software to be able to identify Sobig by Thursday. With auto-update features standard on such programs--and even without such features--the Sobig filter was available to most users in plenty of time to stop the spread of the worm, Hypp nen said

One possible explanation is that, while not widespread, Sobig may be particularly effective at sending out copies of itself. Hypp nen said that an analysis he conducted of 20 Sobig-infected e-mail messages led back to just three infected machines.

A similar phenomenon was noted with the Klez worm when it first appeared, Hypp nen said.

While Sobig’s outbreak has probably peaked, the worm was likely to linger on the Internet for a long time, Hypp nen said.

Antivirus software vendors posted instructions on their Web pages for removing Sobig from infected machines and recommended that all users update their virus definitions to protect against the new worm.

=~=~=~=

Atari Online News, Etc. is a weekly publication covering the entire Atari community. Reprint permission is granted, unless otherwise noted at the beginning of any article, to Atari user groups and not for profit publications only under the following terms: articles must remain unedited and include the issue number and author at the top of each article reprinted. Other reprints granted upon approval of request. Send requests to: dpj@atarinews.org

No issue of Atari Online News, Etc. may be included on any commercial media, nor uploaded or transmitted to any commercial online service or internet site, in whole or in part, by any agent or means, without the expressed consent or permission from the Publisher or Editor of Atari Online News, Etc.

Opinions presented herein are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the staff, or of the publishers. All material herein is believed to be accurate at the time of publishing.